

Memorandum

To: Kayleen Irizarry, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of the State Superintendent of Education
From: Cate Swinburn, Chief of Data & Accountability, DCPublic Schools
Date: June 22, 2012
Re: Response to Alvarez and Marsal's Recommendations and Findings on Test Security

Ensuring that the DC CAS is administered with the highest level of integrity is of utmost importance to DC Public Schools.

Thank you again for your leadership in managing the state-wide test integrity investigation of the 2011 DC CAS. In correspondence sent earlier this year, you notified DCPS that the Office of the State Superintendent of Education had reviewed the 2011 DC CAS data and performed three different types of analyses, including an erasure analysis to flag potential testing concerns. Of the 1,124 DCPS classrooms conducting DC CAS testing in 2011, OSSE identified 24 classrooms in 16 DCPS schools with possible testing concerns. DCPS conducted complementary analysis and identified an additional 36 classrooms in an additional 14 schools with possible testing concerns.

At a later date, you notified DCPS that in order to maintain independence and objectivity, you sought and had retained an experienced, external company to perform a needed review of test security and investigation of the 60 classrooms in 30 DCPS schools with possible testing concerns. Your vendor, Alvarez & Marsal (A&M), identified potential weaknesses and made specific recommendations on ways to improve testing policies and procedures citywide, and prepared a comprehensive and thoughtful summary of their findings in investigating flagged DCPS schools.

I am impressed by the depth and thoroughness of the vendor's review and investigation. While it is very clear that we have areas for improvement, I am heartened that A&M found only two instances of cheating in DCPS schools. Indeed, of the 60 classrooms flagged for potential irregularities, A&M found no evidence of cheating in 58 classrooms. Of the remaining two classrooms, which are in two different schools, both were found to have confirmed cases of test impropriety. These two classrooms represent only 0.2% of DCPS' 1,124 tested classrooms. Additionally, A&M cleared 13 of our schools completely, identified minor errors (e.g., missing form) in eight DCPS schools, and cited non-cheating security violations (e.g., cell phone use in a tested classroom) in seven DCPS schools.

We in DCPS were able to act on A&M's preliminary findings in advance of the 2012 DC CAS administration. We are pleased to now receive and act on the final findings. This memorandum is to inform you of the actions DCPS has taken or will take as a result of A&M's school-specific findings.

On-Site Investigations: Findings and DCPS Actions Taken

The table below summarizes the DCPS actions taken to date in each of the schools flagged for investigation based on A&M's findings.

Category	School Name	Findings	DCPS Actions Taken
1 – No findings (no evidence of violations, wrongdoing, or error) (13 schools)	Ballou HS	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and reminded to be diligent during CAS 2012 Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window
	Brightwood EC	n/a	
	Cardozo HS	n/a	
	Hamilton EC	n/a	
	JO Wilson ES	n/a	
	Leckie ES	n/a	
	Maurry ES	n/a	
	Moten ES	n/a	
	Murch ES	n/a	
	Phelps ACE HS	n/a	
	Raymond EC	n/a	
	West EC	n/a	
	Winston EC	n/a	
2 – Minor (minor test administration errors; no violations or wrongdoing) (8 schools)	Browne EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011 Test Security and Non-Disclosure Agreements missing for Principal and Test Coordinator [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window
	Columbia Heights Education Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Test Security Checklist for High School grades was missing student names. The checklist had test booklet numbers but no student names [Group 2]. A student reported that a Test Administrator would not give the answer to questions but would provide "hints" by giving the definition of words. This report was not corroborated by three other students from the class that were interviewed [Group 2]. A test booklet was allegedly left in the hallway by a Teacher after CAS testing was over. This was not corroborated by the school's sign-in, sign-out sheets; the state's test material inventory; or other adults [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012 Ensured follow-up by A&M regarding student mention of "hinting;" found no evidence to support Followed up regarding alleged stray booklet; feel it is unsubstantiated Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements
	Kramer MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011 Test Security Binder missing [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window

2 – Minor (minor test administration errors; no violations or wrongdoing)	LaSalle-Backus EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 Test Security files were incomplete. File was missing Test security sign in/sign out sheets and no signed State Security and Non-Disclosure Agreement noted for Test Coordinator [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements
	Ludlow-Taylor ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistencies in responses regarding the security of the testing materials in the secured location [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window
	MC Terrell ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 Test Security Binder missing [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window
	Ron Brown MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2011 Test Security Binder was missing [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window
	Tubman ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing Booklets were not consistently signed back in on one day of testing [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned an additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window
3 – Moderate (defined test security violations, <i>not</i> test tampering) (7 schools)	Banneker HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No signed State Security and Non-Disclosure Agreements [Group 3]. • Alleged incident involving one student attempting to cheat by looking at another student's test during testing; not corroborated by other students or adults interviewed [Group 3]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements • Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012 • Followed up regarding allegation of student attempt to cheat; did not find supporting evidence

3 – Moderate cont'd (defined test security violations, <i>not</i> test tampering)	Kimball ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test security sign-in/sign-out sheets not properly documented. No evidence that test materials were signed back in to test coordinator on certain testing days [Group 3]. • Test Administrator failed to inventory test materials with Test Coordinator [Group 2]. • Report that Test Administrators review answer sheets for stray marks in the presence of the Test Coordinator [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted additional follow-up regarding stray marks; determined no impropriety occurred • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements • Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012
	Oyster-Adams Bilingual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test Administrators sent text messages to Test Coordinator when needed help while administering the test [Group 3]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements • Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012
	Prospect Learning Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Test Administrator related a previously-unreported 2011 incident involving another Test Administrator talking on a cell phone during test administration [Group 3]. • A Test Administrator reported picking up the test materials envelope but did not check each one to ensure codes and names matched the security list [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements • Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012
	Simon ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test sign-in, sign-out sheets missing signatures for some end of the testing days [Group 3]. • The combination to the secured testing area – a vault – is located on the back of the vault [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns • Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements • Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012

3 – Moderate cont'd (defined test security violations, <i>not</i> test tampering)	Stuart-Hobson MS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously unreported allegation involving a Test Administrator allegedly helping students by reading aloud to students with special needs during the test. School staff did not report [Group 3]. Multiple people were reported to have access to the secure room where the testing materials were locked up; however, the tests were locked in a cabinet in that room and that only the counselor and Test Coordinator had keys to the cabinet [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted additional follow-up regarding alleged incident of inappropriate accommodations; found no evidence to support allegation School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012
	Truesdell EC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Test Administrator reported that cell phones were utilized by teachers during testing to coordinate bathroom breaks [Group 3]. The 2011 State Test Security binder was missing [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012
4 – Serious/ Critical (definitive test tampering)	King Elementary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In one classroom, two students reported that their teacher pointed out correct answers [Group 4]. In the same classroom, a student reported that the proctor read answers aloud, raising his/her voice at the correct answer. This statement was not corroborated by either of the other two students interviewed from the same classroom [Group 2]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Implicated staff removed from testing Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements Conducted targeted most monitoring during CAS 2012 Personnel action for implicated staff members pending
	Langdon Education Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two students reported that their Test Administrator provided assistance to them and other students during the test [Group 4]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership notified of findings and school-specific concerns Implicated staff removed

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One student noted that the testing classroom was left unattended by the administrator for a few minutes during the test. There was no proctor present [Group 3]. • Access to secured test materials is held by the Principal and Assistant Test Coordinator, not the Test Coordinator [Group 2]. • The Principal indicated that a Proctor and Assistant Test Coordinator erased stray marks on student answer sheets [Group 2]. • Test security sign in/sign out sheets missing from 2011 Test Security binder [Group 2]. 	<p>from testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned additional observer throughout DC CAS 2012 testing window • Required proof of staff training and acknowledgment of state security requirements • Conducted targeted monitoring during CAS 2012 • Personnel action for implicated staff member pending
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